THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

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Original Papers.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS FOR THE DESTITUTE,

ABERDEEN.

By Mr. SHERIFF WATSON.

(*Continued from page* 24.)

The success of the Boys' School of Industry in Aberdeen led to the establishment of a Girls'. A few ladies, who had long devoted much of their time to the prison and penitentiary, disheartened with the promising blossom and stinted fruit of these secluded gardens of reformation, resolved to anticipate the approach of crime, and undertake the training of the young before the prison or the police-cell had stamped the indelible seal of infamy on their name and character. A public meeting was called; but public sympathy had not yet been aroused to the magnitude and importance of the subject, and only a small number assembled. Though discouraged, they did not despair; they proceeded to business, named a committee, published resolutions, and on the 3rd of June, 1843, opened a small school in a narrow lane, under the charge of an old woman who had considerable experience in common school teaching, but could not comprehend the various duties of Industrial School training. Here the school languished for several months, when a young, energetic, and intelligent teacher gave it a new tone and character. Removed to suitable premises, it soon attracted local attention; the improved appearance of the girls, the propriety of their conduct, their intelligence and activity, contrasted strikingly with their previous dirty, slovenly habits, and idle, wretched condition—exciting equal satisfaction and surprise.

The removal of upwards of a hundred juvenile mendicants from the streets, through the instrumentality of these schools, caused a very palpable diminution in the numbers of the class; but there still remained

no inconsiderable number, and these were of the most pestilent description. Deserters from the schools, or children of the poorest and most depraved, they would take no denial to their insolent solicitations. They braved all the corrections of the police; neither the watch-house nor the prison inspired any terror. They laughed to scorn any attempt at their reformation. It was clear that juvenile vagrancy would not exhaust itself, although the children of the better-parented gladly sought admission * into the school, yet those of the ill-disposed preferred, or were incited to continue, on the course of mendicancy, as more congenial to their habits, or more profitable to their destitute parents. Under these circumstances, the promoters of the Industrial Schools were taunted with the inefficiency of their system, and it became manifest that some compulsory process must be adopted, in order effectually to eradicate the evil. In this difficulty it was proposed to employ the police to apprehend all begging children, and convey them to school. The suggestion received the sanction of the authorities, and the temporary use of the soup-kitchen having been obtained as a school-room, the requisite instructions were given, and on Monday, the 19th of May, 1845, seventy-five ragged outcasts were brought in. Their matted locks, tattered garments, and collecting-basket, showed that they were fully equipped for the week's campaign, and their looks of dismay and astonishment at being apprehended and conveyed to the soup-kitchen could only be equalled by those of the managers, who had made no adequate provision for such an assemblage. The scene was a lamentable one, bnt it was nevertheless highly ludicrous. It would require the pen of a Dickens or the pencil of a Cruikshank to do it justice, and we shall not attempt it. It is sufficient to say, that the bold and hazardous enterprise was fully justified by success. In one day, juvenile mendicancy was totally abolished, and in a short time the most perfect order and discipline prevailed in the school. The absence of begging children in the streets was immediately remarked, and the novelty of the Soup-Kitchen Schools attracted crowds of visitors. The working-classes took up the cause, and subscribed liberally. The commissioners of police lent the assistance of their officers, and all seemed desirous to aid in this last attempt to reclaim and christianize the destitute and forlorn. Of the seventy-five children collected only four could read. Now all read, and have daily read to them the glad tidings of the Gospel; and occupying airy and commodious premises, the school exhibits a little hive of industry,

* The admission to the Aberdeen Industrial Schools is quite free to the destitute, and food, as well as instruction and reading, etc., is given in return for a certain portion of labour, the profits of which go to reduce the current expenditure of the School.

intelligence, order, and happiness; and those who at first scoffed at and derided the undertaking, are *now* the loudest in its praise.

In the rapid sketch we have given of the rise of these schools, we have endeavoured to show what may be done with an ordinary degree of energy and decision, in the hope that other towns may follow the example that has been set in Aberdeen.

Before concluding, we may notice that Mr. Sheriff Bell, at the last Annual General Meeting of the Glasgow Industrial Schools Association, is reported to have said, that he had been making inquiry what effect the Society's labours had on the delinquent population of the city, and he seems to have expected an abundant harvest where hardly any seed had been sown, but he had ascertained that the number of juvenile criminals in the Glasgow prisons had not diminished since the establishment of the Industrial Schools.

Glasgow has a population of upwards of 200,000, and it is calculated that there are two or three thousand vagrant destitute children infesting the streets, and subsisting by mendicancy and crime. From this mass of juvenile destitution and delinquency about three hundred boys and girls have been withdrawn from misery and wretchedness, and in the Industrial School are trained to habits of cleanliness, industry, and order. But the outlying thousands are still uncared for; no provision is made for their instruction. If they could repeat the prayer, "Give us each day our daily bread," it would, so far as man is concerned, be unheeded; and no shelter is provided for many of them but the cells of the prison. Is it matter of surprise, then, that during a period of great manufacturing and commercial distress, when the young and healthy could hardly by their industry earn a subsistence, that the starving children of the aged and feeble should, though in a prison, seek that food and shelter which without were denied them?

We never saw charitable or colonial statistics thus tested; and we turn with satisfaction to the criminal statistics furnished by the Aberdeen prison.

The city of Aberdeen has a population of about sixty thousand; and, as already said, the juvenile mendicants in 1843 amounted to about 280. In the different Industrial Schools there are at present above 300 scholars, and we have said that juvenile vagrancy has almost entirely disappeared. Now what have been the results as regards juvenile delinquency? In the Report by the Committee named to forward the scheme of establishing an Industrial School in Aberdeen, it is stated, that "last year (1840) 77 children had been committed to prison; and that during the previous year (1839) 94 had been convicted of various offences; about 10 per cent. on the whole commitments." In 1843, the number of children committed to the Aberdeen prison under 12

years, were 53; in 1844, 46; in 1845, 49; in 1846, the numbers were 28; in 1847, the numbers were 27; and, during last year, one of great commercial and manufacturing distress, the numbers were 19; about 2 per cent. on the whole number of commitments.

But why 19? can juvenile delinquency not be utterly extinguished; are there no other means of correcting little children than by sending them to prison? There are means, if men would use them; when the then selfish and officious disciples of our Lord forbade the poor people to bring their children to him that he might bless them, He rebuked his followers, and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." It is to be feared there are still professing disciples who forbid, or, at all events, who do not assist in bringing destitute and neglected children to Christ, and hence so many of them find their way into prison. Let Industrial Schools be established on a sufficiently broad and liberal basis; let all who need food and instruction be invited to attend; and let the magistrate be empowered, when an infant delinquent appears before him, to inquire into his moral, physical, and religious state; and if found in ignorance and want, to send him to school at the expense of the parish, or of the worthless or negligent parent—this done, we hesitate not to predict that, ere long, the children of the poor and depraved would be as rarely seen within the walls of a prison as the children of the rich and respectable.

We are fully persuaded that juvenile vagrancy and delinquency can only be met and vanquished by some such system, and the experience of every town where the Industrial School plan has been fairly tried testifies to the correctness of our conviction. Why then should it not be universally adopted in all our large and crowded cities? Let us try to regenerate the rising generation of our land, and there is hope for Britain amid all the convulsions that surround her. Let the same system be tried in Ireland, and the fairest isle in creation may become the most moral, the most religious, and the most industrious country in the world.

In vain we multiply our gaols and penitentiaries, and crowd them with multitudes of juvenile delinquents; the terrors of the law may alarm and punish, but they will never soften and reform the subject of their pains. The searing influence of judicial infliction must be exchanged for the tender sympathies of human feeling, and, laying hold of the hapless victim of penury and neglect on the *threshold* of a vicious career, we must seek to implant those Christian principles which can alone enable him to withstand temptation, and cherish feelings which will bind him to his fellow-man as a friend and an ally, instead of leaving him to be forced into an attitude of hostility as a pest and a foe.—*Liverpool Courier.*

THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION:

ITS PRINCIPLES AND MODE OF OPERATION.

The principles of this Society are benevolent, philanthropic, scriptural; they are, moreover, missionary and aggressive. They are the same as those which glowed in the bosom of Wilberforce, animated the affections of Raikes, and fired the energy of Chalmers; the same as those which roused the philanthropy of Howard, kindled the zeal of St. Paul, and filled the soul of the Divine Saviour himself.

They are, therefore, Bible principles. As old as Christianity itself, and springing out of it, they have entered more or less into the heart and life of every true Christian, ever since the Gospel poured its living flood of light and truth upon a darksome, lonesome, sin-stricken world.

But even before Christ came, Old Testament saints—nay, God himself—had declared them. In all the laws of Moses, care for the poor, the needy, and the fatherless, is a prominent feature; and it is very remarkable that nearly all the threatened or inflicted punishments on the Hebrew nation are connected with a neglect of the poor.

In the Psalms of David, too, there are many touching appeals in favour of the poor, none perhaps more touching than that which this Magazine bears on its title-page.

But it was Christ who embodied these most fully, exhibited them most practically, and taught them most impressively. To those who acknowledge him as their King, their Teacher, and their Guide, there is no escape from such commands as this:—"Go ye out into the highways and byways, into the streets and lanes of the city, and compel them to come in."

To seek, and if possible to save, the lost of our fellow-creatures—to bring those who are wandering and out of the way to the feet of Jesus, to the fold of a good Shepherd, who cares more for one such wanderer than he does for ninety and nine who never wander—to draw poor neglected outcasts from paths of sin and error, into paths of pleasantness and peace, is surely a work that Christ looks on with his kindliest smile.

To lift such forlorn, comfortless ones from the "pit of their own degradation"—to bring them to sit with Christ's people here upon earth, and, perhaps, through God's blessing, in heavenly places, with Christ himself—to "stamp burning truth upon their soul"—to pour gentle love into their hearts—to bathe their affections in heavenly dews, fresh from God's life-giving word—to bring their nature into harmony with the divinity that stirs within them, and exists to a certain extent even in such wrecks of humanity as these—surely is the very work that

Jesus delights to look upon—the very work he would delight to do if he lived among us now.

The principles of the Ragged School Union are, therefore, Bible principles: they are thus unchangeable as the word of God, which endureth for ever; for, though "heaven and earth shall pass away, that word shall not pass away."

But they are also missionary and aggressive. They do not lead us to cross vast oceans in search of those who sit in darkness and ignorance, but they lead us to the benighted heathens of our own land—our great towns and crowded cities—to the lost, to the ignorant and the degraded of our lanes, courts, and alleys. They do not suffer us to pass by on the other side, but draw us to such haunts of misery and crime, with the Bible in our hand, and the love of Christ in our hearts—with looks of kindness as our passport, and words of peace as our weapons of war.—See Second Report, p. 30.

Our principles are thus unsectarian: it is sad to have to use such a word in speaking of Bible principles or Christian work—for how can such be sectarian? We are compelled, however, thus clearly to state, that the Ragged School Union is carried on by Christians of various denominations. That we have hitherto gone on harmoniously, desiring to love all who love Christ in sincerity and truth, and believing that those who get nearest to Christ will get nearest to each other—He being the blessed Centre and Sun of Righteousness round which we all move.

We feel, like Nehemiah, that we are doing a great work, and cannot descend to little things or little men, who, with great professions for order, etc., are often but enemies in disguise, having no real love for the work itself, or for those who are doing it. As long as we find earnest Christian men and women rallying around us, and giving their time, and thoughts, and money, to the work of Ragged Schools, we feel bound to extend to them the right hand of fellowship, provided always they take the Bible as the basis of all the instruction communicated,

We trust our principles are also patriotic. We desire to save from crime, which is dangerous and dear, and inculcate habits of industry, which are safe and cheap. We labour to make good citizens of those who are anything but that at present, remembering that the children of this generation will be the men and women of the next; and knowing well the grand thing in all education is to fit the young for that station, and for those duties, which they will have assigned to them when they grow up.

Having thus spoken of the principles of the Society, it is time to say a few words on the manner in which these principles are carried into practice.

Formed for the express purpose of systematizing and encouraging Ragged School efforts in and around London, the Union seeks to help all of every Christian denomination who are striving, by scriptural and moral training, to ameliorate the condition and improve the habits of the neglected juvenile poor.

This it does in various ways: First, by collecting and diffusing information regarding Ragged Schools in town and country, the best mode of forming and carrying them on, etc. Second, by the regular visitation of an inspector, whose duty it is to see that the destitute classes alone are admitted, and the right kind of instruction given, and whose reports are laid before the Central Committee every month. Third, by the formation of Local Committees, for the right government of each school, consisting of respectable tradesmen and others in the vicinity. Fourth, by meetings of delegates from the Schools, who meet one another quarterly, and report verbally as to the state and progress of their Schools, for the satisfaction of the Central Committee, and the guidance of other schools. Fifthly, by written forms of numbers in attendance, etc., also required quarterly. Sixthly, by grants of money towards fittings, books, rent, teacher's salary, and other expenses—grants which are always more liberal if the school is situated in a poor locality, where the surrounding inhabitants are unable to give towards its support. Lastly, by public meetings in various districts, to awaken public attention, collect information, and raise funds for the objects above named.

To these may now be added the establishment of a Monthly Magazine, as a medium of communication between all parties engaged in the work, and a means of increasing its efficiency. The benefit and blessing of such a work, if carried on with the spirit in which it is begun, and supported as it ought to be by the public, it is impossible to estimate.

February, 1849.

RAGGED SCHOOL MEMORIALS:

THE OLD STABLE.

No. II.

In our last communication, we gave some accounts of the rise, progress, and results of the Ragged School in the Old Stable. These would show the necessity for such institutions, and their adaptation to the wants of these long neglected children of the streets. The reader would at once see, that, in cases not a few, ignorance is the parent of crime, and that the best and most simple means for the moral and physical elevation of such a class is to give them a useful and religious education.

Few persons could look upon the two hundred of the veriest outcasts of society here collected, without having their hearts overflowing with gratitude, that such efforts had been begun where civilization had not done its work, because Christianity was not there.

The black effigies of the doll, the well-known sign of "pence," or receiving houses for stolen property, were numerous; the pawn-shops, with their three gilt balls, (the only glittering objects that met the eye,) and the public-house, with its swinging doors, kept constantly moving by crowds of tattered customers—these appeared to be the only establishments where anything like business was done. They were also the only establishments for the instruction of the young, but they neither provided clothing for the naked, nor food for the hungry.

Many are the scenes of interest we have seen in that school-room, over which the memory still fondly lingers, rekindling in our heart mingled feelings of pain and pleasure. Cold must have been that heart that could follow unmoved the youth of nine years, who had just arisen from his straw bed, bounding through the frost and snow, without breakfast, to the school-room. And more especially when he knew that the poor boy never had a shoe nor stocking on his feet; that one brother, thirteen years of age, was transported for seven years, because he would rather steal than starve; and that another brother of eleven was then in prison for the same crime, driven to it by the same necessity. But Charles was not the only boy to be seen in that group, all tattered and ragged; no, he had sixty school-fellows, the greater number of whom never had shoes on their feet, and yet some of them had reached fourteen years of age.

The sufferings of the children during the previous winter, some of whom, like poor James S——,* had fallen victims, was enough to urge us not to allow another season to come without seeking to obtain the means of covering their naked feet. We therefore went from door to door, pleading the cause of these helpless ones, until money was obtained sufficient to accomplish our purpose. We were told by many to whom we applied, that it would be of no use to provide the children with clothing, as their parents would be sure to pawn them. But this was only an excuse urged by those whose hearts had never become alive to the just claims of the poor and needy.

All that was required was obtained to give each child either a pair of shoes or some other portion of clothing. The day these gifts were made to the poor children, was to them a day above all others, in their short and chequered history. It was on the last day of December, and the friends who supplied us with the means were invited to witness the scene. The Old Stable was filled by two o'clock; every child partook

* See page 9 of No. I. Magazine.

of a piece of bread made for the occasion, and a jug of milk. Some noble ladies were present, but which of the two extremes of society enjoyed the treat most we pretend not to say. We cannot indeed describe the pleasure we felt at seeing so many who had been accustomed to do evil, learning to do well. And also so many who seldom had more than a dry crust once a day, enjoying themselves with pleasant, wholesome food.

The roll of barefooted boys was called over, and each one had a pair of shoes and stockings given him, with the distinct understanding that they were his own, not his parents. When these sixty were supplied, the remaining numbers were called up, and every child was presented with some article of clothing according to its necessity. Not a few of them felt that for the first time in their lives they possessed a new garment, which no one ever wore before them. The meeting was closed by an address from the Rev. Robert Moffat, the celebrated African missionary, and praise and prayer to that God who had ever smiled on our efforts.

But the most interesting sight took place next day, when the children returned to school. We have already stated that many of them never had a shoe on their feet before, and great was our astonishment when several of them arrived at school with their new gift under their arm. When asked why they had not on their shoes and stockings, one boy replied, "They hurts my feet, sir." Another, thirteen years of age, said, "My feet feels so funny; you see, sir, I never had no shoes on before." Another was asked "Is it the fashion in frost and snow"—for the snow lay several inches deep—"for people to carry their shoes under their arm?" "You see, sir, my feets are all chilblains, and I couldn't put them on, and I wouldn't leave em at home, 'cause I shouldn't see em again, as mother would take em to uncles, and drink the money; you see, sir, she would have drunk me if I would go up the spout." We knew full well that what poor Charles said of his mother was equally true of his father, for they were both drunkards. Now for a little more of Charles's history. We have already stated, that he had a brother transported and another in prison, the poor children having been left to shift for themselves. Charles became very much attached to the school, and often promised that he would never do as his brothers had done. Ah! poor boy, he often suffered the greatest privation from the want of food.

After trying many shifts, he applied to us for a loan of threepence, saying that he thought he could make his own living, and attend school too. On being furnished with the small amount, he hastened off and purchased twelve boxes of matches. These he sold at a halfpenny each, realising threepence profit. Encouraged by his new undertaking,

he went out every evening with his twelve boxes, and continued with untiring perseverance until they were sold. For nearly two years he continued this system, attending school all day, and doing sufficient business at night to provide him with food for the next. When asked how he managed to live, he replied, "Why, you know I can always manage to make threepence at night, and sometimes more. I spends one penny for breakfast, another for dinner, and another for supper; that's better than my brothers did, and by-and-bye, when I can read and write well, I will get a situation."

The good resolutions of this neglected boy contrast strongly with the conduct of his besotted parents, and is worthy of all praise, and even of the imitation of some who are placed in better circumstances, and enjoying higher privileges. What were the impelling motives that led this boy to the adoption of such a course? Was it the example of his parents, to whom he should have been able to look for protection and support? No; they were the veriest slaves of the gin-palace, and their home the empty, cheerless home of the drunkard. The furniture consisted of two dirty cups that stood on the mantle-shelf; on the empty fire-place was an old tin tea-kettle, without a cover, and a bundle of shavings and dirty straw in the opposite corner of the room, but without even a rag to cover them or their children during their midnight slumber.

Fancy Charles rising from such a bed in the morning, repairing to the back yard to an old water-butt, to wash, (for his drunken parents could afford neither soap nor bason,) to make himself somewhat decent among his schoolfellows. Thus prepared, see him off to the cheap bread-shop, a few doors from the school, to have his morning's meal, consisting of three farthings' worth of bread, and a farthing's worth of dripping, which, however, was as sweet to him as the new-made butter is to those who have not lucifers to sell before they get a breakfast. It might be supposed that Charles was a dull, spiritless boy, broken down by bad living and the cruel treatment of his worthless parents: but no, he was a happy, contented, spirited lad—the very life of his playmates. He was always among the first at school, and never behind with his lessons, pushing onward, as if longing for the time when he would be fit for the duties of life. He had an only sister, who attended the same school; she was also very regular, although she often suffered for doing so from her cruel mother; poor Charles often shared his morsel of bread with her when she could find none at home.

The time at length arrived when our youth went out in search of employment. After much labour he was engaged as an errand-boy in a fishmonger's shop, at four shillings per week. Six years have since passed away, and he is now the confidential servant of his employer. He has ever looked upon his master's interests as being bound up with his own.

Some months after our young fishmonger entered his situation, his mother fell a victim to her passion for strong drink. This event left some impressions on the mind of her dissipated husband, and for a time he abandoned his drunken associates. So altered did he become, that he removed from his wretched hovel, the scene of many a drunken debauch, to a more comfortable abode, which, by industry, he was soon enabled to supply with decent furniture. For upwards of three years his daughter kept his home in comfort, until he again became the victim of intemperance, returning to it " like the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." He soon sold off every article of furniture he possessed, and turned his daughter into the streets. He became the inmate of a wretched lodging-house, where he is now dragging out the remainder of a miserable life. Happy was it for the poor girl that Charles was the honest journeyman fishmonger, for he shared his loaf with her, and paid for her lodgings, until she obtained the means of earning her own living, which she has long done by honest industry, and may be seen on the Sabbath going to the house of God, in company with her brother Charles, both attributing what they are, to the blessing of God on the instructions they received in the Old Stable.

" THE POWER OF THE PENCE."

In the December number of the " Children's Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland," it was suggested that, during the holidays, a special collection might be made by the children in behalf of the Mission Schemes of the Church. Beyond this simple proposal, no other influence was used. Every Christian heart will rejoice to hear that the zeal and willinghood manifested by these children has been almost beyond a parallel. The sums received up to the middle of January amounted to no less than £488. 16*s.* 5*d.* The enormous number of applications the devoted children had made may be inferred from the fact, that, to one amount of £2. 0*s.* 5½*d.*, the names of 191 individuals were given as contributors.

" When in this way," says the *Record*, " one hundred and twenty thousand pennies were collected—more than a quarter of a million of half-pence—a mass of copper amounting to about three tons in weight, and which it would require three strong horses to move—we have surely a striking illustration of what has been called 'the mighty power of littles.'"

Were such an effort made *once a year* by a twentieth portion of the healthy, happy, well-fed children in London, an amount might be collected more than sufficient to support a Juvenile Refuge large enough to hold two hundred poor, destitute children, and supply them with clothing, food, and education. And surely the benefactors themselves would not be the least blest, if, instead of spending their money on trifles—too often to their own hurt—they were thus taught habits of economy and benevolence, and to show a love and a sympathy for their less fortunate brothers and sisters, many of whom are shivering in the midnight winds, with the wet door-step for a pillow, when they are secure within, sleeping sweetly on their warm beds.

Poetry.

THE RAGGED SCHOOL TEACHER'S APPEAL TO ALL CLASSES.

Child with the bloodless cheek,
Poor wanderer pale and weak,
Whose heart has never learn'd to share
The kindness of a mother's care—
Come to the Ragged School.

Victim of woe and want,
Whose clothes and food are scant,
Whose talents are perverted skill,
Whose parents teach thee nought but ill—
Come to the Ragged School.

There, hear the friendly word;
There, have good feelings stirr'd;
There, learn thy passions to control;
And find thy body has a soul
Priz'd in the Ragged School.

Ye wise and learned men,
Who, taught by tongue and pen,
In college halls much learning found—
Think of the ignorant around:
Teach in the Ragged School.

Ye merchants of our isle,
Enrich'd by prosperous toil,
Feel for the half-clad shivering race,
Whose heads oft find no resting-place:
Give to the Ragged School.

Ye lords of noble line,
Whose names and talents shine,
Be ye rich capitals to grace
These columns of our rising race,
Shap'd in the Ragged School.

Ye fair and gentle dames,
Whose beauty influence claims,
Extend that influence around,
Friends of these wretched ones be found:
Speak for the Ragged School.

"Lord of all power and might,"
Who, in Thy followers' sight,
Young children in Thine arms didst take,
And bless them—for Thy mercy's sake,
Smile on the Ragged School.

J. P.

Plans and Progress.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

GREAT difficulties having been experienced by Teachers in keeping order and communicating useful instruction in Ragged Schools, a few hints by a fellow-worker may not be altogether useless.

We shall first address ourselves to the Superintendents of the Sabbath Evening Schools. The youths that attend on that occasion being generally grown lads, who will not or cannot come on other occasions, they are for the most part rude and ignorant in the extreme. The Superintendent must take every precaution, especially if the School is just begun, to prevent rioting, noise, and what is called a "lark."

Having everything arranged, teachers in their places, and books all ready, the rough candidates for instruction must be admitted one by one, and placed at once under the appointed teacher. No more must be admitted at first than the teacher can well manage, as it is much better to have few scholars, and teach them well, than to have a large number, and do the work badly. If numbers crowd to the School, a selection should be made of the most necessitous or well-behaved, and these alone admitted by tickets or a list of names. In some neighbourhoods, a policeman will be needed for a time to preserve order, and prevent noise and crowding at the door. He can generally be had by a letter addressed to the nearest inspector of police, and by paying him a trifle for his services.

The Instruction on Sabbath Evenings should be chiefly religious. Time being short, and many lads, perhaps, there for the first time, never to be there again, everything should be done to make a favourable impression on their minds.

Some hints given in No. 2 Magazine, p. 32, may be found useful in first opening a School. We proceed to give a few hints as to the manner of teaching the Ragged class. As it will depend upon circumstances, whether singing and prayer should be attempted, we shall now suppose the teachers in their class, and their pupils around them, in number not exceeding eight to each teacher. We must consider the teacher to have come to his work full of love and pity, of faith and prayer, "fervent in spirit." If so, he has not come unprepared. Though he relies much on God, he knows it would be sinful to neglect diligent preparation. He has a chapter well studied, many passages marked in his pocket Bible for illustration and reference, many interesting facts and anecdotes in his mind, or in his note-book, so as to catch and rivet the attention of the careless.

When his pupils can read, he will (if he come thus prepared) be almost sure to succeed in his work, that is, if he go about it earnestly, affectionately, and prayerfully. Where his scholars cannot read, it will be found more difficult. In this case he will have to come still better prepared, not only with a subject

well studied, but ready to take advantage of anything and everything that may arise to rivet attention.

The school-room, the locality, the candles, the gas, a pillar, a door, or a window, have all served as the basis for a lesson to a practical teacher. The news of the day, the Queen opening Parliament, the last calamitous accident, a shipwreck, a fire, an execution, have each been found useful as starting points. The proposed lesson will sometimes not do at all. It does not suit the class. They are restless, careless, and rebellious. Their taste must be consulted. It will be no loss of time to find out what they are fond of, and in some cases to get some account (if the teacher and pupils especially meet for the first time) of their family, mode of living, habits, etc. The writer has often got the attention of his scholars by doing this. The particulars communicated to the teacher may be all forgotten by him in an hour, but the scholar does not forget that his teacher listened kindly to his history. The attention once fairly gained, must be retained by variety, novelty, and interest. Great plainness of speech must be studied, clearness of thought, vivacity of expression, simple language, suited not to one or two only in the class, but to all. If this should be thought difficult, we answer, let it be fairly tried, and be assured success will follow.

But the teacher must not expect to accomplish it in a day. He will need much previous assiduity and perseverance. He should study the best school manuals he can find, and by practice make them his own. "Dunn's School Manual," "Stow's Bible Training," "Henderson's Bible-class Lessons," "Louisa David's Sunday School;" and for younger children, "Mayo's Religious Instruction and Model Lessons," or "Todd's Lectures to Children," and the "Peep of Day," will all be found useful. If these cannot be had, Mrs. Mortimer's Tracts for Ragged Schools are very simple, and also many half-penny and penny books published by the Tract Society, by Groombridge, Gilpin, and others. Many useful lessons will also be found in the cheap monthly Magazines, now issuing from the press—in "The Christian's Penny," "The Churchman's Penny," "The Child's Companion," and the Sunday School Union books. These, added to lessons of every-day life, the poor blind beggar, the reeling drunkard, the child run over by a waggon, or falling into the fire, will afford matter enough, if studied with an eye to God's glory, in the light of God's word. That word, if judiciously interwoven, may be made to enrich and sanctify all—blessing him that giveth as well as him that receiveth—the diligent, humble-minded teacher, as well as the poor, ignorant scholar in the Sabbath Evening Ragged School.

February, 1842.

SYMPATHY.—No general laws are able to reach to the variety and depths of human misery and vice; no political science can provide a remedy to raise in the mass the state of a demoralized and corrupt population: sympathy, directed, sustained, and urged on by religion, is the only means available, under the Divine blessing, for achieving through individual amelioration the highest good of society at large.—*Dr. Forbes.*

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In the Prospectus of your excellent Magazine, I observe you set apart a portion of your pages for Correspondence; may I therefore be allowed to make a few remarks on the origin of the term "Ragged," as applied to Schools.

The question has been repeatedly asked—"Who was the founder of Ragged Schools?" and it must still remain unanswered, unless we refer the inquirer back to the days of Raikes, who sought and collected from the streets of Gloucester the pupils of his first Sunday School.

The question, however—"How came the name of 'Ragged' to be attached to Schools?" is much easier explained, and it may not be uninteresting to your readers if a small space in your columns be taken up by the subject.

In the year 1842, the writer, then resident in London, was led to visit the Field Lane Sabbath School, then lately commenced, where he witnessed a scene so foreign to anything he had ever before experienced or heard of, that it made an impression on his mind never to be effaced. On opening the door of the school, then held up a miserable court in Saffron Hill, a motley group of half-clad youths rushed up the rickety staircase into a small apartment, some ten feet square, and commenced leaping upon and overturning the forms which stood in their way—others showed their daring agility by descending from the first-floor window into the yard beneath, whilst the remainder evinced their love of fun and mischief by blowing out the lights, and giving ever and anon a specimen of their vocal talents, by a shouting chorus of some low and popular song; when, however, some order was obtained, and the two teachers present endeavoured to impart instruction with candle in hand, they were obliged to keep on their hats for protection from the rotten vegetables and animal refuse which the rebels without were continually throwing through the broken windows. Such scenes as the one above described lasted more or less for several months, until the following circumstance brought matters to a crisis. The school at this time was open on Tuesday evenings for females, and Thursday for males. One Tuesday evening, being at the school prior to the arrival of the superintendent, the writer was engaged admitting the young women and girls, when he was surprised by a woman coming hastily into the passage of the house, and beckoning him to close the door. As soon as she recovered her breath, she informed him that she had overheard a number of young men state that they intended coming to the school that evening to have a *lark*, and if the teacher interfered, they would "rip him up." One having attempted on a previous occasion to *stab the superintendent*, the threat was deemed no vain one. Ere, however, she had finished her tale, the door was surrounded by a number of them; and, on opening it, and speaking kindly, they civilly asked to be admitted, but the unfairness to the females, if this was allowed, was pointed out, as it would deprive them of their usual night of instruction: but arguments were of no avail; therefore, the door was closed and bolted, and the teacher ascended to the school-room on the first floor, which was already well filled with women and children. He had, however, scarcely entered, when a loud crash, and a general rush up the dilapidated stairs, gave note of their triumph, and the room was crammed with the denizens of the neighbouring lane. Standing in the centre, he spoke kindly to them, and requested the men peaceably to retire. A few complied, but the majority resolutely refused. An appeal was then made to the females to give up the evening, and allow the men to stop, but with no better success.

Fearing the consequences, he determined to send the children away; and whilst so engaged, at a given signal the lights were extinguished, the windows smashed, the forms and tables broken to pieces, and a general rush took place to the stairs, with the movable articles of the room. Here the screaming, swearing, and uproar, as they fell pell-mell over one another, was tremendous. At this time the landlord lay in an adjoining room in a dying state, and his wife and two young children, the only other inmates, supplied fresh lights, but which were blown out immediately afterwards. After considerable difficulty the house was cleared, but not before the woman was nearly stripped to the back by the rough usage she received. Three policemen now arrived, having heard of the "row," the scampering in the court giving signal of their approach. One stated, on inquiry, that "they dared not come singly, *so bad was the locality.*"

The school was soon after removed into a more open thoroughfare, and the writer being appointed treasurer, with scarcely sufficient funds to pay the rent, an appeal to the Christian public was determined upon; and he then, recalling *the scene above described,* and feeling that an interest must be excited on its behalf, gave the name of "Ragged" to the school, as it forcibly and tritely expressed the low character and condition of the pupils, so thoroughly depraved in mind and ragged in apparel. An advertisement appeared in the *Times* newspaper, headed "Ragged Schools," which was the first public intimation of their existence; and letters were addressed to various of the Nobility and Gentry, soliciting their aid to carry on so good and great a work, when the *first* answer received was from the *noble Chairman* of your Union, encouraging us to proceed in our truly "interesting endeavours," and contributing liberally towards our funds, to "mark his concurrence" in the same. S. R. S.

Nottingham, February, 1849.

[The school above referred to has undergone various vicissitudes within the last few years; but our readers will be glad to know that it never was in a more prosperous and efficient state than at the present time. We have received a communication from the zealous superintendent, giving an interesting account of the annual treat to the children, which took place on the 24th of January, of which the want of room compels us to give only a brief outline. Four hundred and thirty-five children partook of a very substantial tea, which was followed by a short address from Mr. Gent. The Rev. John Weir then examined them at some length, on the elementary truths of the Word of God. About 200 children received one or more articles of clothing, a portion of which was provided by the Ladies' Clothing Society, and the rest was sent by benevolent friends. The proceedings closed with an exhibition of dissolving views by Mr. Cox, of Barbican, with which the children were highly delighted. About 200 lbs. of plum cake were distributed among them when retiring, the kind gift of Henry Stuart, Esq., and a large number of buns sent by an unknown friend in the afternoon. From a statement made in the first number of the Magazine, our readers would see that many of the children attending this school are not only ignorant and depraved, but a large number are common pickpockets; others obtain a precarious living by begging, hawking, vending matches, oranges, etc.; and others are generally employed on market-days by the drovers in Smithfield. The scenes to which they are there accustomed eminently qualify them for such engagements as those to which our Correspondent refers, and render their education a work of extreme difficulty; but their attention during the address, the answers given to the questions, and their general conduct throughout the proceedings of the evening, gave cheering evidence that the self-denying labours of their devoted teachers are not bestowed in vain.—Ed.]

Intelligence.

GOLDEN LANE RAGGED SCHOOL.

A Special Meeting on behalf of the above School was held on Thursday, January 25th, in the Lecture Room of the City of London Literary and Scientific Institution, Aldersgate Street; the Lord Mayor in the chair.

Prayer having been offered up by the Rev. J. Branch, the Chairman said, it often fell to the lot of the chief magistrate of London to preside over public meetings, but he thought no meeting could be convened for a more important object than that which they were then met to support. He had to apologise for the disappointment occasioned by his non-attendance when the meeting was previously announced, arising out of a confusion of engagements. As he had recently suffered a very heavy domestic affliction, nothing but a desire not to repeat that disappointment, and a wish to support such an institution as that for whose advocacy they were met, would have induced him to be present on that occasion. As a magistrate, he knew that the juvenile offenders against the laws consisted, for the most part, of those who could neither read nor write, and who had been suffered to wander whither they chose, without reference to the society they kept, or the occupation they followed. By supporting these institutions, society not only benefited the rising generation, but promoted its own interests, by diminishing the expense of punishing crime, and thus lessening a considerable item in the national taxation.

The Secretary then read a statement respecting the operations of the school, and an appeal on behalf of its funds. The following is an extract:—

"The locality for which we plead is situated in the parishes of St. Luke and Cripplegate—viz: Golden Lane, Whitecross Street, and neighbourhood. From thence are daily issuing into our streets and thoroughfares hundreds of forlorn and destitute children, who are only educated in the arts of beggary and theft; and are growing up, the certain subjects of our workhouses, penitentiaries, and prisons.

"To lessen this evil, the Golden Lane Ragged School was established. The Committee feel that its two years' existence has proved its adaptation to meet the moral wants of these suffering and neglected outcasts. Many of them have been taught to read and write, and have obtained an acquaintance with the practical truths of the word of God. But these blessings have been only extended to a few, while hundreds more are 'perishing for lack of knowledge.'

"With a view to meet their case, the Committee have taken, for nineteen years, a large school-room in Honduras street, (adjoining Golden Lane,) which is capable of holding 350 children. By this arrangement they have contracted a debt of £200, which, if once removed, would leave only a small annual rent, and the current expenses of the school. It is now open as a free infant school, with a daily attendance of 120.

"It is also open four evenings each week for boys, who are taught reading, writing, and ciphering—and three evenings for girls, who, in addition to reading, are taught sewing, by which means articles of clothing are made up and given to them, or sold at a trifling cost.

"It is also open for religious instruction on Sabbath morning, afternoon, and evening—in the latter case, from 250 to 300 are in usual attendance, and taught by 25 voluntary teachers.

"The Committee are thus affording gratuitous instruction to upwards of 300 poor destitute children, many of whom would otherwise become the victims of vice and shame—and to enable them to give permanence and enlargement to these efforts, they venture to make this *Special Appeal* for assistance in removing the debt on the school-room."

Mr. Wire, ex-under sheriff, moved the first Resolution. He adverted to the magnitude of juvenile pauperism in general, and the metropolis in particular, contending that nothing but some such agency as that exercised by the Ragged Schools could remedy the evil. It was only by such means that the future peace of the country could be relied on. Many of the revolutions effected on the continent had been brought about by the very class of persons whom the Ragged Schools designed to reach; and one of the reasons why England had enjoyed tranquillity in the midst of so much confusion and disorder,

was to be found in the active and energetic exertions of Christians in seeking out the poor, in endeavouring to administer to their wants, and to train them to industrious and virtuous habits. In this case, as in most others, the benevolent course was found to be the cheapest. The amount expended per head per annum upon the instruction of children in Ragged Schools, that in Westminster for example, was almost beneath notice, whilst the good effected by the outlay was incalculable.

The Resolution was seconded by Mr. W. Locke, who, after paying a deserved compliment to the Ragged School Teachers, on whom, he said, had fallen the heat and burden of the day, narrated several instances of the wretched condition of some of the children who had been reclaimed by them. One lad, he said, who had been an inmate of one of the schools, slept for some time in a pig-stye, until the owner bought a pig, when the poor lad was turned out of his resting-place. Another had not slept in a bed for three years; and another, who had no recollection of having ever seen his parents, had been an inmate of the Westminster workhouse, and was afterwards imprisoned for taking part in Chartist riots.

The Rev. J. Weir, in supporting the Resolution, expressed the gratification he felt in finding that it included religious education, without which, he said, people could not effectually perform even the common duties of life. He attributed the excessive burden of the poor-rates in a great measure to the ignorant and idle habits of our pauper population. Just in proportion to the lack of education, crime invariably prevailed. Knowing, then, that ignorance was the source of crime, and, as proved by the statistics of "Bulwer's France," that a merely secular education did not secure public morality, how ought we to be animated in our efforts to give religious instruction to the people! Much had been said respecting California and its gold; he thought, however, that the Ragged Schools were the best gold mines; in these we had a shaft to sink to obtain unsearchable riches, and if we penetrated deep, we should bring up fine gold—aye, rubies, more precious than ever shone on the brow of beauty, or glittered in the diadem of a monarch. (Applause.) The Resolution passed unanimously.

Joseph Payne, Esq., Barrister, moved the second Resolution, in his usual humorous style. He drew a vivid picture of the condition of England at the time of the Reformation, contrasting its spirit with that of the scene before him. Mr. Payne concluded by some verses which he had composed on the Ragged School movement, which will be found in another part of our columns.

The Rev. J. Branch, in seconding the Resolution, read some statistics, the accuracy of which, he said, his own experience could verify, respecting the prevalence of crime in the locality in which the school is situated. The inhabitants of these districts, he said, had been too long neglected; so long as that neglect continued, why should we go to the expense of building a new court-house for the trial of criminals, whose crime might have been prevented by educational training? Hitherto there had been too great a chasm between the rich and the poor; but he rejoiced that it was now narrowing; and facts proved that the extended intercourse between the two classes, so far from diminishing, tended to increase and deepen the feeling of respect which the poor entertained towards those in higher stations in life.

Mr. Cuthbertson supported the Resolution, expressing his regret at the desecration of the Sabbath by so many thousands in the metropolis. He adverted also to the want of additional teachers in carrying out the objects of the School. The Resolution was unanimously agreed to.

A collection was then made, which amounted to £10. 11*s.* 6*d.*

A vote of thanks was, on the motion of John Wood, Esq., unanimously accorded to the Chairman, who, in replying, repeated the expression of his interest in the Ragged School movement. The Doxology having been sung, the meeting terminated.

WESTMINSTER JUVENILE REFUGE AND SCHOOL OF INDUSTRY.

THE second Annual Meeting of the above school was held on Wednesday, the 5th February, at Willis's Rooms, St. James's, the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P., in the chair.

A hymn having been sung by the children of the school, who, during the early part of the meeting, were stationed at the end of the room, facing the platform, the Chairman briefly explained the

object of the Ragged School movement, which was, he said, to provide receptacles for a class of persons who had hitherto been altogether neglected by the superintending authorities of the realm, and in many instances by their own parents and relatives—the class which had been emphatically denominated "ragged." The Westminster Juvenile Refuge was recommended to the public by very singular advantages. Most of the other Ragged Schools might be regarded as mere palliatives of a great mischief; many children were, by their means, brought within the scope of education, and, imperfect as the system was, they had reason to rejoice over many instances of signal reformation which it had produced. But it was only such institutions as the Westminster School that could be really effective. In this school the education was extended over the whole of the day, so that the children were kept out of the way of temptation and mischief; they were also provided with food and clothing. Now this class of children had no means of sustenance but that arising from begging or thieving; if, therefore, they were taken from the streets, and from those avocations in which they were engaged, it was absolutely necessary to provide for them that which would enable them to go through the day, and receive the instruction afforded. The school likewise furnished an industrial education. For three hours daily the children were occupied with shoemaking and tailoring—not that they were all to be shoemakers or tailors, but that all should be taught the value of industry—the honour attaching itself to all honest occupations. It was contemplated to establish a refuge in which a certain number of meritorious children, selected from Ragged Schools, should be placed for some six months, and then be sent as emigrants to the Colonies, in a fit state to enter upon a course of industrial occupation. Thus vagrancy would be checked, children would be educated, and the colonies would be provided with useful, industrious, and well-principled inhabitants. (Applause.) In this way only would they be enabled to grapple with that enormous and disgraceful amount of mischief which stared them in the face in this metropolis—that exhibition of juvenile depravity, destitution, and misery, which was unparalleled in the civilized world. The evil was not beyond their reach; it only required patience and energy to meet and overcome it.

The children of the Refuge here sung another hymn, and retired.

The Secretary then read the Annual Report of the Institution. That document stated that, since the last Annual Meeting, thirty additional boys had been received into the Refuge; so that there were now in the Institution 130 children, nearly the whole of whom were daily supplied with food, and were receiving the elements of a useful education. During the past year, five boys from the Refuge had been apprenticed to master-tradesmen, and were conducting themselves to their entire satisfaction. As there were now twenty other well-trained lads in the school, who could be recommended by the Committee, it was hoped that masters would be found to take them as apprentices, or employ them as errand or shop-boys. Fifteen boys were homeless, and for these lodgings were provided on the premises; as a return for this, they did the domestic work of the house, under the direction of the housekeeper. Several boys had been given a free passage to Australia; their gratitude for the kindness shown them had been expressed in the most pleasing terms.

The Marquis of Blandford moved that the Report should be adopted, and the Committee be encouraged to persevere in their efforts. It devolved, he said, upon those to whom Providence had given increased means, and larger opportunities than others for doing good, to be careful not to minister solely to their own wants and comforts, but to consider those who were starving and perishing in the streets. Let those, too, who had been richly blessed with spiritual benefits, seek to impart religious instruction to the hundreds of wandering outcasts of the city, and they would often be blessed with the sight they had just witnessed—that of children from whose lips had been heard the ribald jest and disgusting expression, raising those same voices in singing the praises of Almighty God.

The Rev. Wm. Arthur, of Paris, in seconding the Resolution, expressed a hope that that kind of encouragement would be given to the Committee which they so much needed—not that which simply manifested itself in words and attendance at public meetings—but real personal aid and pecuniary assistance. The rev. gentleman adverted to the im-

mense benefits that might result from the education of the "ragged classes," not simply to the children themselves, but to others with whom these might be brought into contact. The Resolution was unanimously agreed to.

J. C. Wood, Esq., moved the second Resolution, "That, considering the deplorable state of many parts of Westminster, it is much to be lamented that the Committee have not the means to enlarge the Juvenile Refuge, and thereby to extend their operations; and this meeting pledges itself to use every effort to obtain an increase of subscriptions, so as to rescue from ignorance, pauperism, and crime, a large number of destitute children." A few years ago, he said, the different scholastic institutions of Westminster were sufficient to provide for all the outcast children of the neighbourhood; but, owing to the increase of population, and other circumstances, that class had increased to such an extent, that nothing but the establishment of Ragged Schools could save the inhabitants from disgrace and loss, fearful even to contemplate. He would invoke the aid of all classes in behalf the new movement, both on the ground of self-interest, and of duty to others, reminding them that it had been said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me."

The Hon. F. Byng, in seconding the Resolution, said, he had lived in Westminster all his life, and knew well the amount of wretchedness which existed in the city—wretchedness not confined, as some supposed, to the lower districts, but which might even be witnessed not two hundred yards from the spot on which they were then met. People in general were, he believed, utterly ignorant of the misery and ignorance which prevailed in the city, and nothing but ocular demonstration could persuade them of the deplorable fact.

A collection was then made in the meeting, amounting to £21. 3*s*. 1*d*.

The Rev. Owen Clark moved the third Resolution, to the effect, "That Industrial Schools, established in our large towns, would diminish the crime and pauperism which now extensively prevail." There were many localities, he said, in London and other places, needing Refuges as much as Westminster itself. He felt fully persuaded that when the benefits of such institutions became known, their importance would be fully seen.

Dr. Daniel briefly seconded the Resolution, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. W. Locke, the Hon. Secretary, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, made an appeal on behalf of the Refuge, and stated that he did not think the benefits of Ragged Schools could be justly appreciated, or the contributions towards their support would be much more liberal.

The vote of thanks having been seconded by Mr. Maxwell, was unanimously carried. After a few remarks from the Chairman, the meeting terminated.

BRISTOL AND CLIFTON RAGGED SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The second anniversary of this Society was held on the 10th of January, at which the Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol presided. The Committee calculated the daily attendance at the schools during the present year at not less than 550 children. The income of the Society during the past year amounted to £335. 6*s*. 11*d*. From the interesting statements of the Right Hon. Lord Teignmouth, it appears that very large and important fields of labour are "white unto the harvest." We trust the active exertions of the Committee will not diminish until the effectual cure becomes co-extensive with the evil.

ALNWICK RAGGED SCHOOL.

We have been favoured with an interesting Report of this school, from which it appears that, like many other such efforts, a great amount of good is being done at small expense. The receipts for the past year only amount to £11. 6*s*. 7*d*., and yet 30 boys and 50 girls are receiving instruction in the elementary branches of reading and writing.

"Several who knew nothing of either on entering the school can now read the Scriptures, and others can write a good small-hand. But while attention has been paid to these branches, the great object of the Institution has not been forgotten, viz:—the moral and spiritual interests of the children.

May the strength of our friends not only be augmented by an increase of funds, but also by a large addition to their staff of teachers, that their hearts may be encouraged by seeing the "work of their hands" more fully established.